



February 14, 2023

Connecticut General Assembly, Human Services Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2000
Hartford, CT 06106

Testimony *Regarding* Raised House Bill 6628, An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage of
Biomarker Testing

Dear Distinguished Chairpersons and Members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Ruth Canovi and I am the Director of Advocacy for the American Lung Association in Connecticut. The American Lung Association is the oldest voluntary public health association in the United States, currently representing the more than 36 million Americans living with lung diseases, including more than 1800 individuals who will be diagnosed with lung cancer in CT this year. The Lung Association works to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through research, education and advocacy. The American Lung Association in Connecticut urges lawmakers to support HB6628 to increase coverage of biomarker testing. This legislation will improve access to critical cancer care for patients in Connecticut, including those with lung cancer.

Comprehensive biomarker testing allows doctors to identify abnormalities in a tumor's DNA, which in turn helps healthcare providers determine the best course of treatment for cancer patients. This is particularly important when treating lung cancer, as there are currently FDA-approved lung cancer treatments for tumor abnormalities in seven distinct genes.¹ Studies show that lung cancer patients that have access to biomarker testing and are thus able to receive targeted therapy treatments have better overall chances of survival.² Biomarker testing is a crucial part of cancer care and has been incorporated into many clinical guidelines so that doctors may make the best decisions for their patients' health.

Despite the evidence for the value of biomarker testing, most health coverage plans have been found to be more restrictive than the National Comprehensive Cancer Network's guidelines for biomarker testing.³ Many patients who should receive biomarker testing may be unable to do so because of insurance coverage restrictions and high out-of-pocket costs. Therefore, it is important that SB976 increases coverage of biomarker testing and removes some of these barriers to care. The American Lung Association is also offering testimony today in the

Insurance and Real Estate Committee to ensure coverage of biomarker testing through private insurance as well.

Increasing coverage of biomarker testing will improve health equity in Connecticut and make cancer care more affordable and accessible for patients. The American Lung Association in CT urges you to support HB6628.

Thank you for your time and consideration today.

Sincerely,

Ruth Canovi, MPH
Director, Advocacy
American Lung Association, Connecticut

¹ [Lung Cancer Biomarker Testing | American Lung Association](#)

² [Value of Precision Medicine in Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer: Real-World Outcomes Associated with the Use of Companion Diagnostics - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#); [The Effect of Advances in Lung-Cancer Treatment on Population Mortality - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

³ [Alignment of health plan coverage policies for somatic multigene panel testing with clinical guidelines in select solid tumors \(futuremedicine.com\)](#)